give credit to both Drs. Allison and Graham for talent, punctuality, and zeal, in the discharge of their clinical duties, and the avidity with which they avail themselves of the wide sources of pathological information to which they have access.

During the period of the session that has already elapsed, the lectures have been well attended, but there has been an unusual dearth of interesting cases. Within this week, however, a peculiar case of measles and another of severe enteritis have been admitted, for which, together with a most extraordinary instance of convulsive affection, we shall find room in our next paper.

It may be noticed that we have passed by the department facetiously denominated the "Clinical Surgery Lectures." In truth, since Dr. Ballingall's retirement, they have become unworthy the attention of the profession, as far as benefit might accrue from their consideration. Constituted as this department at present is, it forms a kind of hybrid existence, half collegiate, half private, carried on by an octogenarian professor, and an ineffective, though well-meaning, infirmity assistant. We should not be justified in occupying time or space with half the censure it deserves, and will only add, that it is waning rapidly into total decay, and that it will be fortunate for the students of clinical surgery, if, like other mules, it generates nothing *like itself* to occupy its place.

CASE OF SIMPLE APOPLEXY, DETERMINED
PERHAPS BY CONCUSSION.

By ALEXANDER THOMSON, Esq.

ANN COLMAN, a child aged three years, was brought to the London University Dispensary, on Tuesday, the 23rd of June last. The child was perfectly healthy and well formed at its birth, and so continued for two months, when the mother left it for employment as a wet nurse, and did not return until the infant was six months old. It was then very greatly emaciated, and laboured under considerable irritation of the bowels, the contents of which were voided, with a jerk, to a considerable distance. As neglect and ill usage had occasioned this alteration, the nourishment of a good breast of milk now restored the child, which gradually lost its emaciation, became fat, and in course of time evinced, for its age, very clear and forward intellects. It never, however, regained its strength, but continued so infirm that it could not turn in bed, nor could it walk until within three months of its death, its movements even then hardly deserving the name, the limbs dragging along after it. Three days before its presen-

tation at the Dispensary the child was thrown upon its back, by a large dog which jumped against its breast, and it was found by the mother in a state of violent agitation and terror. From this, however, it soon recovered, and appearing in the evening as well as usual, was, according to custom, washed all over and put to bed. On awaking the next morning, the child was scarcely able to raise itself, its power of walking was wholly gone, and with violent screams it complained of its knee; its appetite was lost, and it could not be prevailed on to eat. On Tuesday, June 23rd, the thigh began to swell above the glutei of the right side, continuing to do so through the day. On applying at the Dispensary on the Tuesday, no injury was discovered after a careful examination. Some aperient medicine was given, with a cooling lotion to be applied over the swollen hip. This evening, convulsions of the hands, rolling of the head, and great restlessness, came on, and the child was put into a warm bath, from which some relief was obtained; the aperient medicines took no effect; the symptoms lasted through a sleepless night, becoming aggravated towards the morning; the healthy leg was tossed about, and the eyes rolled with rapidity. On Wednesday morning, the child was seen by Messrs. Eisdale and Hogg, who again examined the limb and the child carefully; nothing, however, was said by the mother of the symptoms which indicated cerebral irritation. Leeches were prescribed to the hip, which appeared to be merely bruised, and the mother was allowed to give some jalap powders to the child, which slightly operated; the stools were very offensive, and of a greenish curdy appearance. The symptoms became worse towards Thursday, and the infant was convulsed over the whole of the affected side, short intervals of stupor succeeding, during which the eyes were fixed, the pupils dilated, and the hands clenched. It was in one of these intervals that I accompanied my friend Mr. Eisdale to see the child. I examined the limb very minutely, but it was not shorter than the other; the toe was not turned inwards, and the leg could be bent in all the natural directions; it was certainly not fractured; it presented slight tumefaction above the glutei, and some little redness. Its hands were constantly raised towards the head, which was intensely hot, and the child moaned; derangement of the encephalic functions was evidently going on. The mother said that she bathed her in warm water this morning, and then observed a bruise on the hip, but it could not now be seen. I immediately ordered the head to be shaved, eighteen leeches over the occiput, on the side on which the child had most probably fallen; a spirituous lotion constantly over the scalp,

and a grain and a half of submuriate of mercury immediately, and every other hour after. Nine of the leeches bled freely, and the first powder was given, but before the time for administering the second arrived, the child died in violent convulsions, particularly of the affected side. My surprise at hearing of the death was scarcely removed by the *post-mortem* examination, which leaves little doubt that this was a case of the "simple apoplexy" of Dr. Abercrombie.

Examination 24 hours after death.

The body appeared plump and healthy, and was without any marks of injury, except the slight swelling of the hip. The arachnoid membrane, though quite transparent and destitute of vessels carrying red blood, adhered firmly to the pia mater. Between a few of the convolutions, there was a little effused serum; there was also found about f. 3j. of a sero-sanious fluid at the base of the cranium, which had probably escaped from between the arachnoid membrane and the pia mater, during the dislodgement of the calvarium. The lateral ventricles contained about a f. 5j. of serum. No other morbid appearance, excepting a peculiar softness of the origins of the encephalic nerves, and a generally diffused softness of the cerebrum and cerebellum, could be traced within the cranium. The cerebrum and cerebellum both yielded upon the least touch of the hand. This softness extended also to the medulla oblongata, from which the arachnoid and pia mater could scarcely be elevated, without lacerating its substance. There was no unusual vascularity of the encephalon; the arteries of the lower half of the posterior columns of the spinal marrow were unusually turgid with blood; the posterior columns, in their whole length, were much softer than the anterior, resembling, in consistence, the cerebrum, and not capable of sustaining the pressure of the fingers without yielding. No trace of disease whatever could be found in the abdomen, except distension of the ileum with air, and about two drachms of turbid yellowish serum in the peritoneal sac; the pleural sacs each contained about a drachm of fluid, and also the pericardium; the right costal pleura was highly injected with red blood; the lungs were, in every respect, except colour, quite natural; they had a darker hue than usual, arising, apparently, from venous congestion; the large bronchial tubes were more vascular than natural; the limb was minutely examined, and no injury of the bone, in regard to position or substance, could be traced; the head of the bone was not inflamed, nor did the acetabulum contain more fluid than usual; no appearance of disease, except a little serum in the cellular substance, could be found in the hip.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECALE CORNUTUM.

By W. A. WALFORD, Esq.

THERE is such an abundance of respectable evidence in favour of the alleged specific effect of the ergot of rye, that it would be presumption for any one to positively assert the contrary, on the strength of his own experience only. The testimony in its favour consists, chiefly, of single cases, or at most three or four, related by each practitioner; a number, I presume to think, insufficient to determine a point that has been so long mooted. In nearly all the cases of its supposed efficacy, there is a total absence of that kind of proof which is followed by conviction. In most of those cases, it appeared, there was either deficient or suspended action of the uterus, at an advanced stage of the labour, when every other circumstance was favourable to a speedy delivery. There is no reason to doubt that the uterus would not resume its activity. Every man familiar with obstetric practice, and observant of the phenomena of parturition, has witnessed the most capricious interruptions of the process; he has seen the delivery effected by a renewal of the uterine action, as sudden as its decline was unexpected and inexplicable.

I have employed the ergot of rye in one hundred cases, watched for its *desired* effects with care, and noted my observations with accuracy. The following are the results:—

In four cases of protracted labour from deficient uterine action, I gave the ergot without any *apparent* effect, and I was ultimately compelled to complete the delivery with the forceps.

In two cases of difficult labour from distortion of the pelvis (great projection of the promontory of the sacrum), but without any deficiency of uterine contraction, the ergot was given without any *apparent* increase in the frequency, duration, or violence of the pains, and I was obliged to perform craniotomy.

Thirty of the cases I had previously attended in their preceding labours; to these I gave the ergot, without any *apparent* effect; not one of these women had a labour of shorter duration than was her last, or even her antepenultimate labour. Seven of the thirty were actually some hours longer; and this without any assignable reason, for of course I did not refer it to the ergot.

In the remainder of the cases the drug caused no *apparent* difference in the strength, frequency, or duration of the pains; nor was there any *apparent* increase of the expulsive power, indicated by the head descending in a greater degree during the contraction, than before the exhibition of the medicine.